

## **Keswick Buddhist Group (Theravada)**

**18 December 2025**

### **Keswick Buddhist Group Founding in 1989 and Anniversaries**

Keswick Buddhist Group was founded on 4 December 1989, and is the oldest Theravada Buddhist Group in Cumbria. A joint celebration of the 30th anniversary was held with BGKT Buddhist Group of Kendal (Theravada) in Kendal on 12 December 2019. These are small local lay groups which meet in Keswick and Kendal to meditate and study.

The 15th anniversary of the group was celebrated at a joint celebration in Keswick with BGKT and Keswick Throssel Hole Zen Buddhist Group in 2005. The 20th anniversary of the group was celebrated at a joint celebration in Keswick with BGKT in 2009. BGKT and the Keswick Group attended Carlisle Buddhist Group (Theravada) on Thursday 3 December 2009 to celebrate the 20th anniversary. The 25th anniversary was celebrated in Kendal with a lunch for Keswick Buddhist Group and BGKT in 2014.

BGKT and Keswick Buddhist Group have been honoured by several visits of senior Buddhist monks during the last 30 years. Highlights include:

### **Luang Poh Sudhiro**

weblink <https://buddhamettasocietyuk.weebly.com/>

Senior Thai Monk Luang Poh Sudhiro led a meeting and meditation session in Kendal on 12 December 2019, which celebrated the 30th anniversary of the Keswick Buddhist Group. Buddhist Monk Bhikkhu Jatapanno accompanied him. The prestigious title of Phrakhravinayadhara which emanates from the King of Thailand, is in recognition of a Monk who upholds the vinaya [monastic rules] in an exemplary fashion. A member of the Sangha Supreme Council of Thailand bestowed this title on Luang Poh Sudhiro in recognition of his outstanding work for the Dhamma [Buddhism], at the Civara Dana ceremony of Sammapatipadarama Monastery on 21 November 2010. There were only 10 holders in the whole Sangha [Community of Buddhist Monks].

### **Bhante Henepola Gunaratana Maha Thera 1927-**

Bhavana Society weblink <https://bhavanasociety.org/>

Senior Sri Lankan Buddhist Monk Bhante Henepola Gunaratana Maha Thera visited BGKT and Keswick Buddhist Group (Theravada), in 1993 and 1995. He led a retreat for the two groups at Lattendales Quaker Retreat Centre at Greystoke in Cumbria in 1995. He is the Head of Bhavana Society West Virginia USA, and an internationally respected meditation master.

### **Wisdom Experience**

Bhante Henepola Gunaratana

<https://wisdomexperience.org/>

<https://wisdomexperience.org/bhante-g/>

<https://wisdomexperience.org/content-author/bhante-gunaratana/>

His best known books are the *Mindfulness In Plain English* series published by Wisdom Books. His biography is *Journey to Mindfulness: The Autobiography of Bhante G.* Bhante

Henepola Gunaratana. Boston (USA): Wisdom Publications, 2003. (ISBN 0-86171-347-8)  
<https://wisdomexperience.org/product/journey-mindfulness-0/>

### **Aruna Ratanagiri [Harnham] Monastery Northumberland**

weblink <https://ratanagiri.org.uk/>

Keswick Buddhist Group has attended Aruna Ratanagiri [Harnham] Monastery for many years, and Monks have visited and taught the Keswick Group. Two members of Keswick Buddhist Group took refuge in the Triple Gem and undertook to observe *Panca Sila* [Five Precepts] and became Upasakas [lay Buddhists] at Aruna Ratanagiri [Harnham] Monastery, on *Asalha Puja* [Full Moon] day, 22nd July 1994. This was the first large ceremony offering *Panca Sila* to a large group of people, held by a Forest Sangha Monastery in England.

In *An Introduction to Buddhist Ethics: Foundations, Values and Issues* by Peter Harvey, there is a photograph on page 63 of Upasaka Jotima entitled Lay people giving alms-food to monks at a festival at Ratanagiri [Harnham] monastery, north-east England.

### **Ketumati Buddhist Vihara Manchester**

weblink <https://www.ketumati.org/>

Venerable Pidiville Piyatissa Maha Thera (The Head of Ketumati Buddhist Vihara Manchester) has taught and led retreats for BGKT Buddhist Group of Kendal (Theravada) and members of Keswick Buddhist Group who attend BGKT's meetings for 20 years since 1999. Group members have attended retreats and events at Ketumati.

Venerable Pidiville Piyatissa Maha Thera gave Buddhist names to members of Keswick Buddhist Group in 2010 and 2018. *Certificates of Becoming an Upasaka* for Having Taken Refuge in the Triple Gem [Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha] and Observed the *Panca Sila* [Five Precepts] and receiving Buddhist names were presented in 2010 in Kendal, and in 2018 at Ketumati Buddhist Vihara's [Monastery's] Vesak celebrations in Manchester. The presentation in 2010 was by a senior Sri Lankan Monk Venerable Siyabalapitiye Buddharakkhita Thera from a Monastery in Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka.

The High Sheriff of Cumbria led a meeting on 26 February 2021, with Venerable Pidiville Piyatissa Head of Ketumati Buddhist Vihara (Manchester). The meeting was also attended by Venerable Galpottayaye Pemananda from Ketumati Buddhist Vihara, and BGKT Secretary Jacquetta Gomes. The High Sheriff of Cumbria Facebook Page includes Keswick Buddhist Group.

weblink <https://www.facebook.com/hscumbria2020/photos/a.112265030426890/256736352646423/>

Venerable Pidiville Piyatissa Maha Thera led a day of practice in Kendal on 9 August 2022. The day included a ceremony in which Venerable Pidiville Piyatissa Maha Thera was the Preceptor when an *Upasaka* from Keswick Buddhist Group and an *Upasika* from BGKT took the the *Ajivatthamaka Sila* (Eight Precepts with Right Livelihood as the Eighth) for Life. Venerable Piyatissa presented them with cream sashes to wear at Buddhist meetings.

### **Teaching the Dhamma [Buddhism]**

In Theravada Buddhism teaching the Dhamma [Buddhism] can be undertaken by lay people who have been authorized to do so by Senior Bhikkhus [Buddhist Monks]. A member of

Keswick Group received a Teaching Certificate in 2008. Venerable Piyatissa presented another member with a *Certificate of Competence to Teach Theravada Buddhism* and a *Sangha Authorized Dhamma Teacher* badge in 2018. Lay teachers from BGKT have visited Keswick Buddhist Group since 1992 and have taught and helped organize Buddhist celebrations.

### **CMDM Cumbria Moon Day Meditation**

weblink <https://www.buddhistgroupofkendal.co.uk/cmdm-cumbria-moon-day-meditation/>

Members of the Keswick Buddhist Group have attended and supported the other Theravada Buddhist Groups in Kendal and Carlisle. Attendees of the three Groups are able to meditate at home from 7-9 pm on the four moon days (full, new and half-moon) knowing that others will also be doing so. Any Cumbrian Theravada Buddhists who are not members of the three groups are welcome to participate.

### **Satipanya Buddhist Trust Shropshire**

weblink <https://www.satipanya.org.uk/>

A member of Keswick Buddhist Group has attended long meditation retreats in various venues. In recent years these have been at Satipanya Buddhist Trust in Shropshire. Bhante Bodhidhamma Head of Satipanya Buddhist Trust visited The Quaker Tapestry Kendal on Friday 30 June 2023. He was the guest of BGKT and Keswick Buddhist Group.

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Search for Introducing Buddhism or Buddhist Group of Kendal

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Authors

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### **Satipanya Buddhist Trust**

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#### **DECEMBER NEWSBYTE 2024**

“Many of you will know Julian Holdsworth who comes regularly to Satipanya on retreat. Julian lives in Keswick and having accrued a sizable collection of Buddhist texts from his studies which started in the mid 1970s, he decided to share his knowledge, founding the Keswick Theravada Buddhist group. This provided a space where people could come together to investigate the Buddha-Dhamma. On the 35th anniversary of the group's foundation, we congratulate Julian for enriching so many lives and hope others will be inspired to follow suit. Sadhu Julian!”